

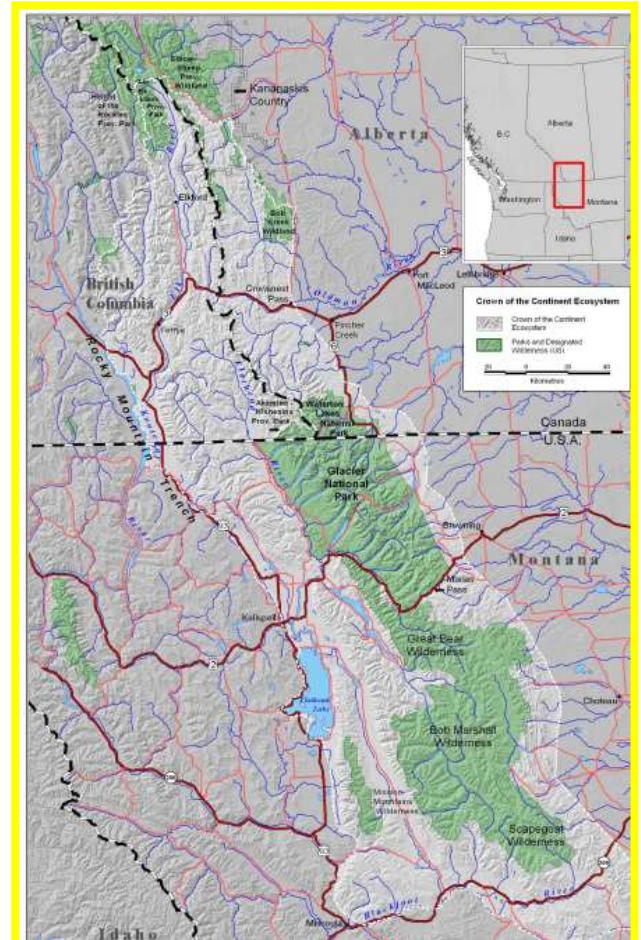
Explore the Crown of the Continent

What's special about your place?

National Geographic Geotourism MapGuide

The National Geographic Society invites local residents to help map the world-class natural, cultural and historical assets in the Crown of the Continent. Local residents and visitors in Montana, British Columbia and Alberta may nominate cultural or natural landmarks, attractions, activities, events or local businesses that capture the unique character and beauty of this region. The result will be a Geotourism MapGuide" and an interactive web site.

The development of the MapGuide requires site nominations from residents of this diverse Rocky Mountain landscape straddling the international border. The Crown of the Continent Stewardship Council - a broad alliance of communities, businesses, government agencies, tribes and First Nations, conservation and historic preservation groups - will help National Geographic map ***what's so special about the Crown of the Continent.***



Geotourism: *Tourism that sustains or enhances the geographical character of a place –*

Its environment, culture, aesthetics, heritage, and the well-being of its residents.

According to the Travel Industry Association of America, 55-65 million American travelers are "geotourists" Over half of U.S. travelers feel it's harder to find unspoiled places than it used to be. A National Geographic survey finds that the Crown of the Continent is one of North America's great unspoiled places, even while facing modern challenges.



Project Goals and Principles

- Ensure high-quality visitor experience
- Highlight unique qualities of communities and the region
- Maintain region's appeal for residents and visitors
- Expand cross-border understanding
- Support collaborative stewardship strategies
- Benefit local communities

The Crown of the Continent: An International Treasure

- The pure headwaters of North America flow to the Pacific Ocean, Gulf of Mexico, and Hudson Bay.
- An ecological mixing zone and wildlife hot spot: Boreal meets coastal, mountains meet prairie, rich river valleys climb forested slopes to alpine tundra.
- Vibrant, friendly communities with authentic small-town character.
- Over 9,000 years of documented human occupation: Native traditions continue in aboriginal territories that span today's political borders.
- Abundant public wildlands: Parks, Crown lands, National forests, wilderness.
- Two World Heritage Sites: Waterton-Glacier International Peace Park and Head-Smashed-In Buffalo Jump.



Head-Smashed-In Buffalo Jump



Creating the National Geographic MapGuide: A Community-Based Process

All stakeholders in the region are encouraged to participate, including residents and visitors.

Site Nomination Process: National Geographic invites your recommendations for visitors and neighbors: wildlife viewing spots, recreational trails, local foods, historic districts, unique businesses and places to stay, community festivals and traditions. Attend a workshop. Go to the project web site. Fill out a nomination form!

Crown of the Continent Stewardship Council: A regional advisory committee will represent all facets of geotourism -- community leaders, public land managers, food and hospitality sectors, native peoples, conservation and civic groups, historic preservation societies, artisans and artists, eco-tour operators, and others. The Council will lead a bi-national grassroots effort to develop the regional MapGuide with National Geographic, promote the tenets of geotourism, and encourage regional stewardship.

To get involved, go to www.crownofthecontinent.net or contact:

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This project proudly supported by the Montana Department of Commerce, British Columbia's Kootenay Rockies Tourism, the Alberta Geotourism Consortium (including Trail of the Great Bear, Waterton Chamber of Commerce, Waterton Lakes National Park, and Alberta Provincial Historic Sites), Glacier, Russell and Gold West Country tourism commissions in Montana, the Whitefish Convention and Visitor Bureau, the Alberta Ministry of Tourism, Parks, Recreation and Culture, the University of Montana Public Policy Research Institute, the National Park Service, USDA-Forest Service, the Bureau of Land Management, the Sustainability Fund, and the Henry P. Kendall Foundation. Project coordination provided by National Parks Conservation Association in cooperation with the Chinook Institute for Community Stewardship.